ANNEX 20

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TOP SECRET

Control 5473

Rec'd September 17, 1947
6:45 p.m.

FROM: London

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 5006, September 16, 6 p.m.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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One. It is apparent from recent talks with top officials in Eastern and Egyptian Departments Foreign Office (Embassy's 4965, September 15) that these officials attach utmost importance to high level US-British discussions regarding political and strategic aspects of Middle East. Garran, acting head Eastern Department, who is coordinating preparations for these talks, advised Embassy September 15 that Foreign Office suggestions regarding these discussions were approved by Bevin September 13 and were sent to British Embassy, Washington, for communication to Department by British Ambassador.

Two. Garran summarized these suggestions by saying that if US and British military should undertake talks without high level political advisers on hand, military would very soon be stymied by problems unsolvable without political advice. If step one were solely military it would probably result in series of questions for high level political discussion rather than in practical strategic answers. Consequently, British Government is suggesting via British Embassy, Washington, that an important British general and possibly Michael Wright, Assistant Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, should arrive Washington about October 10 with a view to participating in talks between US military representative or representatives and a counterpart of Michael Wright. It is Foreign Office thought that political advisers would meet with military and that from their discussions would come series of recommendations agreed at official level which would be reviewed by Secretary and Bevin separately and which would be basis for agreement between Secretary and Bevin when these two meet.

Three. Garran said that Foreign Office has recommended early preparation and exchange for agenda for talks so that both sides will have time to prepare necessary data. He thought that among items which British would put on their list were Palestine, British base in Cyrenaica, Anglo-Egyptian dispute and improvement of Middle East living standards as preventive measure against Communism. Garran said that US would probably wish to talk about Greater Syria among other matters.

Four. Garran expressed belief that exchange of views on these problems is long overdue and hope that if US Government agrees British suggestions regarding form of talks policies formulated ad referendum at official level would be endorsed by US Government and British Cabinet.

HAWKINS